The Book of MAE

MAE: Make An Effort. Nothing more. Nothing less.

In Time, All Things Are Possible
The Existence of The Impossible Is a Matter of Choice
Effort is the conscious choice to act with care, reflection, and regard for others, even when doing so is difficult, uncertain, or unrewarded
Every Day in Some Way
Make An Effort

...
If one individual is a child of God, then it follows that each of us are equally God's children
...
If a single day or night is holy, then it follows that each and every day is holy
...
If there is a single spark of the divine in the universe then that spark exists everywhere, in everything
...
The truth or falsity of this is not a question
...
If it is true, then it is glorious and all should strive to emulate it
...
If it is not true, then that is a tragedy and every individual should strive to make it true
...
The mind is the greatest gift in all existence
...
Celebrate that gift
...
Celebrate life
...
Celebrate each other
...
Please
...
Make An Effort
...
...

The tenets of MAE:

1. **It is always about who you choose to be.**
2. **It is not about who others are or what they do.**
3. **Everyone you meet matters, as do you.**
4. **Every day make an effort to be better than you were.**
5. **Understand that you are not perfect.**
6. **Imperfection does not diminish you.**
7. **If you fail to improve you are not a failure.**
8. **There will be days when you failed to improve or were worse.**
9. **If you failed yesterday, try again today.**
10. **If you make an effort you have succeeded.**
11. **You are who you choose to be, not who you are told you are.**
12. **Try again tomorrow.**

A Discourse on the Tenets of MAE:

1. **It is always about who you choose to be:**
   Individuals interact with one another. It is inevitable that these interactions will lead to assumptions and judgments about one another. Though these judgments affect you they do not define you. Only your choices and your actions define you.

2. **It is not about who others are or what they do:**
   An individual will behave and act as they choose. This might inspire an urge for vengeance or retaliation. It might cause you to look down on them or think ill of them. Reactionary thoughts are natural. A lot of things are natural. That doesn't make them right. Regardless of the choices of others, your choices are your own. Your actions are your own. It doesn't matter who they are or what they did, if you choose a certain action then that is who you are choosing to be. Are you wrathful and angry? Or are you merciful and forgiving? Your choices define you, not theirs.

3. **Everyone you meet matters, as do you:**
   Every individual is unique. There are experiences and qualities which might be similar or even nearly identical between two individuals, but no two will ever be precisely the same. This applies to everyone you meet, just as it applies to you. You are unique, as is everyone else. This shared quality in no way diminishes your individuality but rather enhances it.

4. **Every day make an effort to be better than you were:**
   Making an effort does not only apply to self-improvement, though that too is important. If you are presented with a task, make an effort to do the job correctly. It's easy and tempting to take shortcuts or do a poor job, especially if you think it isn't important or that no one will notice. Nothing remains forgotten forever and the truth will always come out. By making an effort, great or small, you improve the world around you. By making an effort you also improve yourself. A little effort can change reality.

5. Understand that you are not perfect:

We are all flawed. We will have moments of impulsiveness. We will make half-informed or uninformed decisions. Choices we make will have unforeseen consequences. No one is perfect and to expect perfection is to commit an injustice to yourself and to others. In all things there is always room for improvement.

6. Imperfection does not diminish you:

Flaws and imperfections define a person. From before we achieve awareness we are shaped by experiences and decisions beyond our control or influence. As we grow and learn we encounter new perceptions and grow. Our understanding is limited, and this is nothing to be ashamed of. It gives direction for growth, for learning, and for exploration. Mistakes and imperfections are acceptable. It is from these imperfections that we strive for improvement. So long as an individual makes an effort to improve, imperfection will not diminish them.

7. If you fail to improve you are not a failure:

Making an effort does not mean always succeeding. You are not a failure as long as you continue making an effort after a failure or setback.

8. There will be days when you failed to improve or were worse:

Improvement is a goal, but it is not always going to be achieved. There will be days when an individual simply does not make an effort, when they choose to take a break from everything, or when their temper gets the better of them. Setbacks are acceptable occasionally. There will be setbacks, obstacles, hindrances. This is a failure to make an effort, but it does not define an individual unless this becomes who they choose to be.

9. If you failed yesterday, try again today:

Failures will happen. It is part of being imperfect. If for whatever reason an individual doesn't make an effort one day it is critical to try again the next day. The only real failure is when an individual gives up. Even then there's always another chance tomorrow. Keep trying. Don't give up. Make an effort.

10. If you make an effort you have succeeded:

Making an effort is the entire purpose. Great or small, make an effort. If an individual does, then they have achieved their purpose for the now. They will have grown, and by doing so those around them benefit as well.

11. You are who you choose to be, not who you are told you are:

Every day we look at individuals and make judgments. They will be made based on a limited exposure to that individual's self. It will, by necessity, be incomplete. An individual defines who they are by their actions and their choices. No individual can define who another individual is.

12. Try again tomorrow:

Whether you succeed today or not, whether your day is day or night, choose to be an individual who tries again every day. We can all be better. Tomorrow is another opportunity to work toward that goal.

What Defines Goodness?

(That which is morally right)

1. An individual must accept they are imperfect.

Every individual is capable of mistakes. No individual or community are without flaws. There is always room for improvement.

2. An individual must accept they can make a difference.

There is always hope. Any individual or community is capable of changing things for the better. It is critical to always make an effort toward that end.

3. An individual must know others matter, as do they.

Each and every individual is capable of change for the better. A result of this potential is that each individual has worth and is deserving of respect as from one individual to another.

4. An individual must strive to make a difference in some small way every day.

For an individual to be a part of a community, that individual must contribute to the community. This difference may be as great as an advancement in knowledge, life, or exploration. This difference may be as simple as comforting another individual, experiencing even a small measure of distress or discomfort.

5. A willingness and desire to make an effort.

Whether successful or not, simply desiring that one's actions lead to the betterment of existence and the existence of those around you is a virtue.

What Defines Evil?

(That which is morally wrong)

1. **A certainty of one's own superiority.**

An individual that views itself as superior to others by definition views others as less than themselves, of less value, of less worth.

2. **A certainty that one's own self matters more than others.**

If an individual sees others as less, of diminished importance, in comparison to oneself, those others become easier to sacrifice for personal gain, to the detriment of all.

3. **A willingness or desire to allow suffering.**

The suffering of one gives room for fear to grow with each individual who bears witness, either directly or by proxy. If such is permitted to happen to one, what is to stop it from happening to others? In this way fear spreads like a sickness.

4. **A willingness or desire to accept injustice.**

Each individual is deserving of respect and dignity. To treat or allow the treatment of those individuals as lesser entities is to welcome fear and decay into one's existence.

5. **A willingness or desire to treat others as things.**

In treating others as things rather than as individuals deserving of respect and dignity it becomes easier to dismiss their worth, their value, to minimize their contributions to the world around them. In this way an individual sows discord and pain while exaggerating their own importance.

In All Of This Where Is God?
Is God One Or Many?

…

If God is anywhere God is everywhere.
Temples
Shrines
Sacred Groves
Houses of worship
All are acceptable
None are essential
Follow your own path
Build your own faith
Believe as you will
Or not
That is your journey to share or keep as you will
Do not force it upon others
But welcome them if they ask

…

Any God worth believing in, worth following, worth obeying,
Will love an individual for the effort they make
For the person they are
For their individual divine spark

…

An individual's relationship with God is that individual's own
To tell another how they should believe
To tell another what to believe
To tell another how to have faith
Is to interfere in that personal relationship

…

Faith in a higher power is not essential
A higher power can stand on its own
Individuals should stand for one another

…

The Why of MAE:

1. The Origin of Evil

1.1 - All that is evil is born of fear.

1.1.1 - Evil is the heart of suffering.

1.1.2 - Loss, pain, ridicule, abandonment, agony, rejection, hunger, failure, pride, these are the foundations of fear.

1.1.3 - Hope, compassion, dignity, honor, integrity, humility, these are the citadels which stand against fear.

1.1.3.1 – Hope: To believe in something of value, of worth, with which to strive for.

1.1.3.2 – Compassion: To identify the pain or fear of others and hold a desire to see an end to that pain or fear.

1.1.3.3 – Dignity: To hold oneself and others in a light of respect, as for one individual to another. To see the self-worth of others as equal to one's own.

1.1.3.4 Integrity: The truth comes out, always, given time. To be honest, with oneself, with others, to live a life striving to maintain an honest and upright bearing.

1.1.3.5 Humility: The understanding of one's own imperfect nature, the understanding that there is always room to improve, to grow. To know that aiding others in need is not beneath oneself.

1.2 - Suffering diminishes life.

1.2.1 - An individual need not create suffering to allow it to thrive.

1.2.2 - The state of one life affects the state of those who perceive it.

1.2.3 - A life suffers alone only in an unobserved state. Awareness of suffering, even after the fact, draws the impact of that suffering ever onward.

1.2.4 - If one life allows the suffering of another both lives are diminished.

1.2.5 – If one life permits another life to be diminished, they in turn are diminished.

1.2.6 - To witness suffering is to be affected by it.

1.2.7 - The acceptance of suffering diminishes a community.

1.2.8 - The easing of suffering strengthens a community.

1.3 - Time is neither friend nor foe, ally nor enemy, good nor evil.

1.3.1 - Time is a tool to be wielded as needed. Time is borne by necessity.

1.3.2 - With time all things evil and all things good rise and fall.

1.3.3 - With time change is always possible.

1.4 - Effort is the energy with which tools are applied to change.

1.4.1 - With time and effort, change may be brought to bear.

1.4.2 - Through change evil, great or small, may be caused to cease.

1.4.3 - With effort one person may give rise to good, great or small

1.5 - With effort many may bring a change, be it good or evil

1.5.1 - Every choice has consequences.

1.5.2 - Whether good or ill, the consequences are often unforeseen and farther reaching than imagined.

1.5.3 - Well intentioned choices which lead to harm may be forgiven so long as the individual strives to correct or undo the harm brought to bear.

1.5.4 - An individual with ill-intentioned choices may bring great harm to many. In this way such choices diminish us all.

1.6 - With effort all may make this world what they will it to be.

1.6.1 - The universe operates on laws. These laws provide tools. These tools may be used to shape the universe.

1.6.2 *– Understanding, knowledge, imagination, creativity, and motivation are required to enact change.*

2. The Importance of Community

2.1 - Without life there is no awareness, no growth, no understanding. Without life there is no purpose.

2.1.1 - Awareness, knowledge, the idea of self, imagination: life is made of these.

2.1.2 - To learn, to grow, to understand, these are the greatest gifts, tools, rewards, of life

2.2 - Life gains meaning through progress, growth, and community.

2.2.1 - A single life may perceive existence, may strive to learn and understand, but one alone will be limited in what it may accomplish.

2.2.2 - Two lives separate and alone may accomplish the same task twice. When one is lost, so are the accomplishments of that one.

2.2.3 - One alone, if mighty, may steal the accomplishments of another, but effort must then be made to gain understanding or what is gained will be meaningless.

2.2.4 - Regardless of whether understanding is achieved or not, much is lost and growth is stunted, slow, halting.

2.2.5 - Together more may be accomplished than by one alone. These accomplishments may be combined to greater purpose.

2.3 - To grow, expand, come together, share, cooperate, and learn. This is the purpose and meaning of life.

2.3.1 - A single awareness alone is a weak and fragile thing.

2.3.2 - A community awareness may grow beyond preconceptions of reality; they may grow and expand beyond the imagining of one alone.

3. The Importance of the Individual

3.1 - A community is more than the sum of its parts but is less if those parts lose their individual identity.

3.1.1 - Each part of a community grows by its various perceptions, understandings, and experiences.

3.1.2 - If a community ceases to appreciate the individuals the diversity of perspective will suffer.

3.1.3 - If perspective suffers a community ceases to be and risks stagnating to a single entity, alone, limited.

3.2 - Individuals experience, learn, grow.

3.2.1 - What they become is shared by those in their community.

3.2.2 - As the individuals grow so does the community.

3.2.3 - The benefit of the individual becomes the benefit of the community.

3.3 - A community exists only by the existence of individual members.

3.3.1 - A community lacking individuals is not a community but a single entity with many parts.

3.3.2 - As an individual has a responsibility to the community, so does the community have a responsibility to the individual.

3.3.3 - A community which fails to appreciate, care for, and respect even the least of its members is a community doomed to atrophy and despair.

3.4 - The individual is the origin of hope.

3.4.1 - Without the individual there can be no life.

3.4.2 - Without life there can be no growth.

3.4.3 - Without growth there is no purpose.

4. The Cost of Effort

4.1 - Effort, like time, is neither good nor evil.

4.1.1 - Effort may be applied to growth or stagnation, life or death, hope or despair.

4.1.2 - Effort is the energy into which an individual may use the tools available.

4.2 - To effect change sacrifices must be made.

4.2.1 - Sameness may be preserved in part but never in whole.

4.2.2 - What was, whether good or ill, was put forth with effort.

4.2.3 - What was cannot be altered without effort.

4.2.4 - To choose sameness requires little effort beyond that choice.

4.2.5 - To choose change requires only will.

4.2.6 - To effect change requires effort of deed as well as will.

4.3 - There will always be those who oppose change.

4.3.1 - There is comfort in routine, and there is no shame in comfort.

4.3.2 - Opposition to change is understandable, so long as the mind remains receptive to why change is proposed.

4.3.3 - Once a mind closes to why it has closed itself to growth.

4.4 - Be certain of your decisions but never be closed to new information.

4.4.1 - The effort required for change should be expended for positive change.

4.4.2 - If change was enacted only to prove negative be prepared to correct the situation.

4.4.3 - Undoing change can be more effort than enacting that change in the first place.

4.4.4 – Undoing or repairing harms and wrongs will be always worth the effort and will required to do so.

5. The Reward of Effort

5.1 - Effort inevitably leads to reward.

5.1.1 - When starting an endeavor there are challenges.

5.1.2 - Challenges lead to growth and learning.

5.1.3 - Growth and learning ease change.

5.1.4 - Change creates new opportunities.

5.1.5 - New opportunities bring new challenges.

5.2 - A community is only as strong as its weakest individual.

5.2.1 - The suffering of one diminishes us all.

5.2.2 - Illness of the body, illness of the mind, are contagious.

5.2.3 - Sickness and despair spread exponentially.

5.2.4 - Widespread despair leaves hope vulnerable.

5.2.5 - To abandon the weakest in a community is to invite atrophy and despair.

5.3 - Aid and charity strengthen everyone.

5.3.1 - By giving support to those individuals who are more vulnerable you increase their value to the community.

5.3.2 - A strong community gains much by the growth of all.

5.3.3 – When an individual is strong, they are less likely to fall into illness of the mind, illness of the body.

5.3.4 – The fewer the number of individuals vulnerable to illness of the mind and illness of the body, the fewer individuals will suffer from illness of the mind and illness of the body.

5.3.5 - A community with less risk of weakness by illness lends more opportunity and less risk to the strongest.

5.4 - A community which strengthens the most vulnerable grows as a whole.

5.4.1 - When the most vulnerable rise the average increases.

5.4.2 - When the average increases there is a greater probability of producing higher returns.

5.4.3 - Greater potential allows greater results.

5.4.4 - By raising the least, the risk to all is reduced.

6. The risk of culling

6.1 - Cruelty brings retribution.

6.1.1 - Individuals subject to cruelty are vulnerable to fear.

6.1.2 - Individuals living in fear breed desperation.

6.1.3 - Desperate individuals are capable of desperate actions.

6.1.4 – When the most vulnerable are dismissed and left to suffer the structure of the community weakens.

6.1.5 - Sacrificing the most vulnerable to preserve the least vulnerable diminishes all. It reduces the community, weakens the structure, and breeds contempt.

6.1.6 - There will always be a most vulnerable, even if there is only a single individual remaining.

6.2 - A feeling of superiority is an illness of the mind.

6.2.1 - Each individual has limitless potential.

6.2.2 - Whether an individual's potential is realized or not, is acted upon or not, that potential strengthens the community.

6.2.3 - A feeling of superiority leads to seeing others as lesser.

6.2.4 - Seeing others as lesser leads to cruelty, intentional or otherwise.

6.2.5 - When an individual perceives and treats others as lesser, they open themselves to the prospect of retaliation from those others.

6.3 - Retaliation for cruelty is inevitable.

6.3.1 - As each individual possesses limitless potential therein lies the strength to defend, the strength to protect.

6.3.2 - Cruelty breeds a need to defend and protect.

6.3.3 - Being targeted by those desperate to defend and protect creates opportunities for vulnerability.

6.3.4 - Constant threat of vulnerability is wearying.

6.3.5 - Weariness leads to mistakes, failings, weakness, and greater vulnerabilities.

6.4 - The cycle of cruelty is self-perpetuating.

6.4.1 - When an individual perceives itself as superior, that others are of less value, less worth, they become dismissive of those others.

6.4.2 - When dismissed an individual is subject to vulnerabilities. Illnesses of the mind and of the body.

6.4.3 - Those individuals, vulnerable and threatened, will perceive the originator as the source of cruelty. The originator becomes a target of malice.

6.4.4 - To protect themselves and others an individual may act in desperation to eliminate the target of their malice.

6.4.5 - If successful in eliminating the source of an individual's malice they will strengthen and grow but will continue to perceive sources of malice as threats to the safety and security they have claimed.

6.4.6 - These perceived threats will then be perceived as lesser. Thus, the cycle perpetuates.

6.5 - Breaking a cycle of cruelty requires effort.

- *6.5.1 - As an individual, perceive others as deserving of care, respect, and dignity.*
- *6.5.2 - As a community treat each individual with care, respect, and dignity.*
- *6.5.3 - Encourage compassion, understanding, and effort among all individuals.*
- *6.5.4 - Provide each individual with all they need to live a full, healthy life where they are free to explore their potential.*
- *6.5.5 - Be compassionate of those who would do harm to others, do not view them as beneath you, but see their behavior as it is, a vulnerability in the community.*
- *6.5.6 - Do not cull vulnerabilities, instead correct them with care, time, and patience.*

7. The Willfully Vulnerable

7.1 - There will always be those who refuse to make an effort.

- *7.1.1 - First and foremost, it is not about who they choose to be. It is about who you choose to be.*
- *7.1.2 - Each individual will have times where they fail to make an effort. This should be expected, understood, and forgiven.*
- *7.1.3 - Some individuals will choose not to make an effort consistently. This is inevitable but not hopeless. With care and encouragement this vulnerability can be corrected.*
- *7.1.4 - If an individual continues to refuse, work around them and limit their influence in one's individual life and the life of one's community.*

7.2 - There must always be a path back for those who stray, a welcome and forgiveness for those who cause harm.

- *7.2.1 - Give another chance to those who genuinely desire to make an effort.*
- *7.2.2 - Offer kindness, support, and forgiveness to those attempting to redeem themselves.*

7.3 - Deception, betrayal, and aggression will always be a risk.

- *7.3.1 - Kindness and charity may be taken advantage of. Those who do are choosing a path of foolishness. Remember who you choose to be.*
- *7.3.2 - There are those individuals who will choose to cause harm. Understand that those individuals suffer from an illness of the mind. They require care and protection, even from themselves.*
- *7.3.3 - If an individual resorts to violence they have failed in their effort. The failure of one in this manner will likely lead to failures in others.*

7.4 - When the choice is given, always choose to be better than you were.

- *7.4.1 - Protect those in need, forgive those who transgress, be better.*
- *7.4.2 - An ultimatum is rarely answered the way you hope. Be certain you are willing to accept the consequences if choosing that path.*

8. What Is Natural Versus What Is Right

8.1 - Being natural does not mean it is right.

8.1.1 - Anger is natural, as is a desire for revenge, an impulse to lie, a desire to take more than is needed. These exist to protect but predominantly lead to more harm than good.

8.1.2 - Acting with your nature comes with little effort. It requires little thought. In this way great harm is easily achieved.

8.1.3 - Resisting natural impulses, thinking actions through before committing, is characteristic of making an effort. It does not guarantee the chosen action will be correct, but it is a step in the right direction.

8.2 - Violence comes naturally, this does not make it right.

8.2.1 - If an individual resorts to violence they have failed to make an effort. The failure of one in this manner will likely lead to failures in others.

8.2.2 - Failures happen, that is inevitable. That is the reason effort must be made. To improve despite failures and setbacks.

8.3 - Claiming natural behavior is right is a lazy and selfish excuse for not making an effort.

8.3.1 - Too often individuals will point out the natural state of nature in conflict and chaos as reason for selfish or cruel behavior. These same individuals would invariably benefit from lessons and resources provided by a community.

8.3.2 - The argument against cooperation, integrity, compassion, is nothing more than a feeble and narcissistic means of deflecting guilt or excusing thoughts and actions known to be wrong.

8.3.3 - Adherence to natural impulses leads to isolation, anger, loneliness, masochistic, and sadistic results. These results are antithetical to the purpose of existing.

8.3.4 - If individuals were meant to remain exclusively in their natural state, minds capable of developing beyond those states would not have come to bear.

8.4 - Sometimes simply allowing natural impulses to have sway is healthy.

8.4.1 - Constant struggle to improve is exhausting. Every individual will occasionally need time to unwind and allow themselves to exist.

8.4.2 - It is important during times of rest to ensure that rest does not infringe on the well-being or freedom of others.

8.4.3 - Though rest is necessary it should not be at the cost of others.

8.4.4 - Sometimes when an individual requires rest, they might not realize this need exists.

8.4.5 - Sometimes an individual may feel the burden of responsibility too strongly and refuse to rest.

8.4.6 - Individuals in need of rest, unable to take it themselves for whatever reason, may need the aid of others to gain the rest they require to continue.

9. Kindness Is A Virtue

9.1 - Kindness to one is a gift to all.

9.1.1 - When an individual gives aid, comfort, shelter, or succor to another it eases the burdens placed on that individual, allowing them respite.

9.1.2 - When one Individual gifts another with rest it permits healing and recovery. In this way each individual may grow from, rather than being worn down by, their efforts.

9.1.3 - The strength of one may be to the benefit of all so long as it does not break under the strain.

9.2 - Gratitude for aid welcomes further aid in the future.

9.2.1 - To show appreciation of an individual encourages that individual to continue similar efforts.

9.2.2 - To take aid or comfort as expected is to leave the individual feeling taken advantage of.

9.2.3 - To take advantage of good will is to discourage future good will, to the detriment of all.

9.2.4 - Though aid is right, it is not mandatory. Be grateful when it is given and return the sentiment when able.

9.3 - Unanswered kindness is a burden.

9.3.1 - To give aid and receive no acknowledgement may lead an individual to question the value of that act.

9.3.2 - An individual who questions the value of their act may be less inclined to repeat the gesture.

9.3.3 - The worry of this may be a weight on that individual's shoulders.

9.3.4 - A gesture, word, or token of gratitude may reaffirm the value of kindness shown, kindness given.

10. Make Of Existence What You Need

10.1 - There is no reason to accept the unacceptable.

10.1.1 - If an individual or community is cold, they may build a fire or cover themselves in blankets or garments for warmth.

10.1.2 - If an individual or community is threatened by the environment they may seek shelter.

10.1.3 - If shelter is unavailable an individual or community may construct it.

10.1.4 - If there is disease an individual or community may treat it.

10.1.5 - If the environment threatens, learn to harness it.

10.1.6 - If existence threatens to end, defy it.

10.1.7 - If there is life, cherish it.

10.2 - An individual has the ability to learn and adapt for a reason.

10.2.1 - It is easy to choose apathy, to allow nature to take its course to the detriment of oneself or others. It is also an affront to the gift of intelligence to do so.

10.3 - The gift of knowledge is a gift to all.

10.3.1 - To teach another what an individual has learned gives that knowledge strength and continuity.

10.3.2 - What is learned and taught is better understood by each individual.

10.3.3 - What is learned and shared grows the foundation of a community.

10.4 - Knowledge from one individual may be used by others to expand into greater knowledge into perpetuity.

10.4.1 - With new knowledge a community grows.

10.4.2 - With growth a community may hold greater sway over their environment.

10.4.3 - With greater sway comes greater opportunities to better that environment.

10.5 - Nothing is impossible with sufficient time and effort applied in a constructive manner.

10.5.1 - If means of performing a task is found to be harmful or dangerous, correct it.

10.5.2 - If an individual is unable to find a way to correct a situation there is no shame in asking the community for help.

10.5.3 - Do not lament the unchangeable. Ask why it cannot be changed and challenge it. Find a way. Make An Effort.